

win the Olympics in 2000. He refused to leave before getting back letters the prison authorities had confiscated. Once free, he immediately resumed his work for democracy. He was rearrested, and after a 20-month incommunicado imprisonment he was sentenced to another 14 years.

Although censorship insured that few Chinese heard of Mr. Wei after 1979, he has remained a touchstone of the democracy movement. In January 1989, Fang Lizhi, the astrophysicist, wrote a public letter to Mr. Deng asking for amnesty for political prisoners, mentioning only Mr. Wei by name. That letter touched off more letters and petitions and was one of the sparks of the student movement and the occupation of Tiananmen Square.

There is no visible dissent in China today. Some of the activists went into exile, many were arrested, others gave up politics and turned their talents to commerce.

The moral force of Mr. Wei's writing recalls the prison letters of other famous dissidents, such as Martin Luther King Jr.'s "Letter From the Birmingham Jail," Adam Michnik's "Letters From Prison" and Vaclav Havel's "Letters to Olga." Mr. Wei's letters are less eloquent, however. He is not a man of words, and he was probably not writing with an eye to publication.

But the most important thing the others had that Mr. Wei does not is widespread international support. Mr. King, Mr. Michnik and Mr. Havel knew that people all over the world were looking out for them and their governments were under pressure to free them, treat them well and heed their cause.

This security is as important to a political prisoner's survival as food and water, and Mr. Wei and his fellow Chinese dissidents do not have it. Their names are not widely known. While some American and other officials have brought them up during talks with Chinese leaders, in general the outside world treats Beijing officials with the deference due business partners.

Today Mr. Wei suffers from life-threatening heart disease. Because of a neck problem, he cannot lift his head. All indications are that he has not seen a doctor in more than a year. He is due to be released in 2009—if he lives that long.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

VISIT TO THE SENATE BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC, HIS EXCELLENCY VACLAV HAVEL

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, I am proud to present the President of the Czech Republic, His Excellency, Mr. Vaclav Havel. He is here on the floor.

RECESS

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the Senate stand in recess for 7 minutes, so the Senate may greet him.

There being no objection, at 5:35 p.m., the Senate recessed until 5:43 p.m.; whereupon, the Senate reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer [Mr. SMITH of Oregon].

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair recognizes the Senator from Arkansas.

ORDERS FOR WEDNESDAY

Mr. HUTCHINSON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that at 9:15

a.m. on Wednesday, the Senate resume consideration of S. 717 and Senator GREGG be recognized for up to 10 minutes in order to withdraw his amendment, and there be, then, 20 minutes of debate equally divided between Senators GORTON and JEFFORDS; and immediately following that debate, the Senate proceed to a vote on or in relation to the Gorton amendment No. 243, to be followed by a vote on or in relation to the Smith amendment No. 245; immediately following that vote, the bill be read a third time and the Senate proceed to a vote on passage of H.R. 5, the House companion measure, if it is received from the House and if the Senate language is identical to the House bill. I further ask consent that there be 4 minutes of debate, equally divided in the usual form prior to the second vote and 4 minutes equally divided between the chairman and ranking member prior to the third vote and, additionally, the second and third votes be limited to 10 minutes in length; and, finally, immediately following those votes, Senator STEVENS be recognized to speak in morning business for not to exceed 45 minutes, to be followed by Senator LEAHY for not to exceed 45 minutes, and further, following that time, the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 31, H.R. 1122, a bill to ban partial-birth abortions.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

WEI JINGSHENG

Mr. HUTCHINSON. Mr. President, most of the time when I stand on this floor following Senator WELLSTONE, I will be on the opposite side of Senator WELLSTONE's comments. This evening, I would like to associate myself with the comments that Senator WELLSTONE made. I think between the two of us, we pretty well cover the political spectrum as we stand today on the floor of the United States Senate and call for the immediate release of Wei Jingsheng, China's most prominent political prisoner.

Because of his courageous stand as a voice for democracy and human rights, Wei Jingsheng was sentenced in 1979 to 15 years in prison. He served 14½ years of his term and was released in September 1993 as part of China's bid to host the Olympic Games in the year 2000. Wei continued to speak out for human rights and was detained, again, by the Chinese Government less than 6 months after his release.

Wei Jingsheng was first jailed in 1979 because of his peaceful activities and writings during China's democracy wall movement, notably his famous essay, "The Fifth Modernization—Democracy." Following his release from prison in September 1993, he met with journalists and diplomats, wrote articles for publications abroad and continued to assert the rights and aspirations of the Chinese people.

Mr. President, on December 13, 1995, Wei Jingsheng was tried and convicted

of the totally unfounded charge of conspiring to subvert the Chinese Government. He was sentenced to 14 years in prison and 3 years deprivation of his political rights.

Human rights organizations and governments around the world have condemned the trial and severe sentence. We, the Congress, have unanimously adopted resolutions calling for Wei's immediate and unconditional release. The European Parliament has also called for his release, declaring that Wei had been "persecuted because he was demanding democratic rights for Chinese people."

Mr. President, it is my understanding that Wei's family has appealed to the United Nations for help, increasingly concerned about his failing health, which has further deteriorated. Though he is no longer in solitary confinement, Wei is under constant surveillance from other inmates while cell lights are on 24 hours a day, visits by his family are restricted, and he has no access to outside medical care.

Wei Jingsheng remains a symbol of hope in China for those within China who are voiceless. They have steadfastly refused to give up their beliefs, their principles and their commitment to democratic reforms, despite the suffering and punishment that they have endured.

I believe that by honoring Wei for his courageous commitment to human rights and fundamental freedoms, we will draw attention to the ongoing struggle for fundamental human rights in the People's Republic of China at a crucial time in that nation's history. Calling for the immediate release of Wei sends a strong message to China on behalf of the entire international community.

On Friday of last week, I joined a bipartisan and bicameral effort in honoring Dr. Nguyen Dan Que, along with Mr. Harry Wu, at the third anniversary of the Vietnam Human Rights Day. As I speak today, Dr. Que still remains in prison unable to leave Vietnam to seek medical attention and unable to speak freely about the abuses he has suffered at the hands of the Vietnamese Government. Of course, Mr. Wu, who fought for representative government and human rights in China for many years, was persecuted and held as a prisoner of conscience by China's Communist dictatorship. He was eventually allowed to emigrate to the United States where he has, thankfully, continued his efforts to help the Chinese people gain liberty and human dignity.

On August 25, 1995, Mr. Wu was expelled from China and returned safely to San Francisco. While this case was notable because Mr. Wu is a naturalized American citizen, the Chinese Government holds many thousands of prisoners who, like Mr. Wu and Wei Jingsheng, are guilty of nothing more than speaking out in defense of human liberty.

While the cases of Mr. Wu, Wei Jingsheng and Dr. Nguyen Dan Que